

Abstract

An inserter assembly is operable between a closed condition blocking movement of a suture anchor through the inserter assembly and an open condition in which the inserter assembly is ineffective to block movement of the anchor. The inserter assembly may have an end portion which pierces body tissue. In one embodiment, a tubular member has a plurality of segments which are moved from a closed condition to an open condition. In another embodiment, a plurality of wires extend along an inner side of a passage in a sheath. As the suture anchor slides along the wires, force is transmitted to the sheath to expand the sheath and operate the inserter assembly from the closed condition to the open condition. If desired, the wires may be omitted and the sheath resiliently expanded by a member which encloses the suture anchor. Indicia may be provided to indicate the depth to which the inserter assembly is inserted into body tissue.